



Simposio Internacional: Evolución por cooperación. La obra de Lynn Margulis (1938-2011)

International Symposium: *Evolution by cooperation. The work of Lynn Margulis (1938-2011)*

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The future of Mankind

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We know something of our past. We think we know the present. Some may see the future as a continuation of both. They are wrong. We are in a new situation (well labelled the Anthropocene) that requires us to confront an unprecedented range of issues: the multiplication of our species in all its aspects (10,000 more every hour and almost 80 million every year); economics and how we measure health and wealth; the future source of our food and energy supplies; conservation of the natural world and other forms of life; adaptation to climate change; and the shortcomings of the conventional wisdom, even science, in all its aspects. Most forecasts are wrong, but let us jump a hundred years. By then humans are likely to be living in a more globalized world of rapid communication. The geographical balance of political power will change. More than ever there will be a single human society in which humans increasingly resemble a superorganism. Human numbers may well come down. Communities in and out of cities will be more dispersed, with some people more comfortable but others more vulnerable. Even the evolution of our species may take a different path with effects on the brain. Already many are less interested in words than in visual images, and have difficulty in integrating their thinking and actions. With accelerating change in land, sea and air, all life systems are under threat. But life itself is so robust that the dominance of any species, even our own, could be no more than a relatively short episode in the story of life on Earth.

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